

High School needs in regards to the Evergreen Visioning Project

Summary

Using East Side Union High School District (ESUHSD) published student generation rates, and conservatively accounting for currently approved development and the development proposed by the Evergreen Visioning Project (EVP), we can conclude that the already high enrollments at Evergreen's two high schools will become much higher. By the end of development, Silver Creek High will very likely reach enrollment of 2,922 students and Evergreen Valley High will reach 3,231 students. Depending on final numbers of units approved for development, these enrollments could reach over 6,300 students combined at schools whose combined permanent capacity will be only 4,300, leaving over 2,000 kids without permanent seats. Possible boundary changes will have only a minor effect on the problem.

The EVP development proposals signal the closing of the last remaining large parcels of land in Evergreen. This means that opportunities to locate a new high school in Evergreen will be gone as well. Given the EVP process timelines, ESUHSD must publish a plan by June 2005 so that the public has a chance to react and decide if that plan is acceptable so that a final, accepted proposal can be made by September 2005.

Detailed Analysis

In order to arrive at the development impact on the high schools we need to arrive at a student generation rate (SGR). Using the ESUHSD "Projected Enrollments from 2001 to 2011" report (particularly pages 17,20,28-30), prepared by Enrollment Projection Consultants, we can follow groups of 4 grade levels through the Evergreen School District. Since we are planning for future impacts, we should follow back as far as possible so we can project into the future as far as possible (as the document recommends on page 28). When analyzing the 2001 K-3 class we see a SGR of .23 (single-family detached [SFD] in all of Evergreen except golf course). This is the only reliable data we have from ESUHSD at this point. Some of the data from the ESUHSD report might lend itself to an SGR of .29 for SFD homes (Industrial and PHGC), and attached (ATT) homes (Arcadia and College) at .08. We don't have access to the detailed analysis to know, by comparison, what rate might best apply at each site (the report mentions 985 planning areas), so this analysis uses the .23 value as a best estimate at this point. A significant statement from the ESUHSD report appears on page 30: "...the majority of these detached homes are slated for the Evergreen elementary district region..." and, "...should provide significantly more high school students" (note this document was published in February 2002, before the EVP development came to light).

The tables below will include an analysis using SGR .12 to give some idea of what the range might be should more data become available, although it should be noted that an even higher value than SGR .23 may be required for SFD sites. The analysis that follows will show the impacts using these values to demonstrate a range of possibilities.

Additionally, we need to know the total housing units both currently approved and the numbers that the EVP is proposing. The EVP task force members have advocated a limit of 4,200 units and the EVP developers have advocated a higher total of 5,675. The EIR will actually explore a range from 3,800 to 5,700 units. This analysis will use the task force's recommended limit and will show the worst-case scenario at the EIR's upper limit.

The following high schools will be affected by the developments proposed by the Evergreen Visioning Project:

Site	High School	Option A – EVP 4,200			Option B – EVP 5,700		
		Units	SGR .12	SGR .23	Units	SGR .12	SGR .23
Industrial	Evergreen Valley	1,050	126	242	1,950	225	431
Arcadia	Silver Creek	1,850	222	426	1,875	234	449
PI Hills GC	Mt. Pleasant	600	72	138	825	99	190
Ev College	Evergreen Valley	300	36	69	500	60	115
Misc	All 3	400	48	92	525	63	121
Current*	EValley/SCreek	500	60	115	500	60	115
Totals		4,700	564	1,082	6,175	741	1,420

The EVP project has not finalized the number of units to be developed, so the above numbers are simply a reasonable estimate. Actual numbers per site may vary, but total overall impact is likely very realistic. Additionally, for the sake of the discussion, we will assume the miscellaneous infill, "Misc", projects will be spread across all 3 high schools. The final row, "Current*", represents developments already approved and under way (for example, The Ranch and Evergreen Specific Plan projects). For purposes of this discussion the impacts of these current developments is spread evenly across Silver Creek High and Evergreen Valley High.

Evergreen Valley High Impact

Evergreen Valley High School (EVHS) was built (opened 2002) for 1,700 kids. By fall of 2006, when EVHS has its first full 9-12 enrollment, the student population will reach at least 2,700 students. Currently there are 12 portables on campus. A building planned for the site will increase permanent capacity to 2,100 students. ESUHS plans to accommodate the additional 600 students in portable classrooms either at EVHS or on the property of Evergreen College (if the magnet program attracts enough students). The development projects above will have the following impact:

Evergreen Valley HS Impact	Option A – EVP 4,200			Option B – EVP 5,700		
	Units	SGR .12	SGR .23	Units	SGR .12	SGR .23
Industrial	1,050	126	242	1,950	234	449
Ev College	300	36	69	500	60	115
Misc (1/3)	133	16	31	175	21	40
Current* (1/2)	250	30	58	250	30	58
Totals	1,733	208	400	2,875	345	662
Total enrollment		2,908	3,100		3,045	3,362

By adding 400-662 new students to EVHS, the total enrollment will be from **3,100 to 3,362 students** by the time EVP is fully built out. At the average of 3,231, this represents 1,131 students over the planned permanent capacity of 2,100. To accommodate the additional students EVHS would need either 38 portable classrooms, or 3 more buildings the size of the currently planned expansion.

Silver Creek High Impact

Silver Creek High School (SCHS) was built (opened 1969) for 1,800 students. For the past several years SCHS has had an average enrollment of 2,400 (enrollment was as high as 2,800 before EVHS opened). The bathrooms, locker rooms, lunch line (there is no cafeteria), and eating areas have *never* been expanded to handle the current overcrowding. Additional students have been accommodated in 30 portables that have been on the campus for over 15 years. This systemic over-crowding has had a significant impact on the facilities. School grounds can best be described as “overrun”. Students have noted the appearance of the school at site council meetings. The community must not underestimate the impact of the environment on the students and how it affects their willingness to learn. A new building planned for the campus (thanks to 2002 Measure G) will increase permanent capacity to 2,200. The development projects above will have the following impact:

Silver Creek HS Impact	Option A – EVP 4,200			Option B – EVP 5,700		
	Units	SGR .12	SGR .23	Units	SGR .12	SGR .23
Arcadia	1,850	222	426	1,875	225	431
Misc (1/3)	133	16	31	175	21	40
Current* (1/2)	250	30	58	250	30	58
Totals	2,233	268	515	2,300	276	529
Total enrollment		2,668	2,915		2,676	2,929

By adding 515-529 new students to SCHS, the total enrollment will be from **2,915 to 2,929 students** by the time EVP is fully built out. At the average of 2,922, this represents 722 students *over* the planned permanent capacity of 2,200. To accommodate the additional students SCHS would need either 25 portable classrooms, or 2 more buildings the size of the currently planned expansion.

Mt. Pleasant High Impact

Although exact data is not available, we can use typical building standards of the time to predict that Mt. Pleasant High School (MPHS) was built (opened 1965) for 1,700 students. For the 2004-2005 school year enrollment is 2,050 students, with overcrowding accommodated by 23 portables on campus. The development projects above will have the following impact:

Mt. Pleasant HS Impact	Option A – EVP 4,200			Option B – EVP 5,700		
	Units	SGR .12	SGR .23	Units	SGR .12	SGR .23
Pl Hills GC	600	72	138	825	99	190
Misc (1/3)	133	16	31	175	21	40
Totals	733	88	169	1,000	120	230
Total enrollment		2,138	2,219		2,170	2,280

By adding 169-230 new students to MPHS, the total enrollment will be from **2,219 to 2,280 students** by the time EVP is fully built out. At the average of 2,250, this represents 550 students *over* the permanent capacity of 1,700.

Impact Summary

Using the midrange of the values above, the following table provides a summary of impacts on each of the high schools affected by the development proposals:

High School	Enrollment		Permanent Capacity	Needed seats
	Without EVP	With EVP		
Mt. Pleasant	2,050	2,250	1,700	550
Evergreen Valley	2,700	3,231	2,100	1,131
Silver Creek	2,400	2,922	2,200	722
Total	7,150	8,403	6,000	2,403

Averaging the two scenarios (using SGR .23), we see that the developments above will generate **over 1,253 new high school students**. Evergreen's already over-crowded Silver Creek High and Evergreen Valley High will bear the brunt of this impact. The most likely scenario is that these two schools will end up with over 3,000 students each.

ESUHSD Proposals

ESUHSD Facilities Chief Alan Garofalo attended an EVP meeting and asserted that the district has capacity in its other schools to accommodate as many as 2,500 more students. More recent published accounts show open seats (again mostly accommodated with portables) at high schools bordering or near the EVP impacted high schools: James Lick 600, W.C. Overfelt 800, Yerba Buena 800. Currently the district has no plan to adjust boundaries, but for the sake of argument lets assume they will eventually take action, even though there is no indication that they will.

James Lick's 600 open seats are dubious at best. Because this school is on the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) list, any student transferred there has the immediate right to be transferred out. So, its 600 seats are useless unless, and until, this school is taken off the NCLB list. James Lick has been on this list for 2 years, and if it does not meet its growth targets this year it will be shut down completely, forcing the current 1,100 students into other ESUHSD schools.

Yerba Buena's 800 open seats could take some pressure off of Silver Creek, but, a look at the map, and likely street boundary changes, indicates that Yerba Buena High is more likely to take some students from Overfelt High, and then Overfelt's boundaries could be extended southward to take pressure off of Silver Creek (for instance by dropping the boundary down to Capitol Exwy and Aborn). The Arcadia development lies just outside Overfelt's southern border, so the (midrange at SGR .23) 428 students from EVP/Arcadia could be accommodated at Overfelt, leaving only the miscellaneous infill sites to impact Silver Creek. This could mean that Silver Creek's enrollment would instead be 2,493 with needed seats at 293, which represents 10 portables or 1 more building the size of the current expansion.

ESUHSD also hopes to expand the Biotech/Forensics magnet currently housed in portable classrooms that sit on the Evergreen College campus. The program currently has 100 students and hopes to expand to 400. It remains to be seen how many additional students will opt to attend high school at this satellite facility. But, if it did attract an additional 300 students from EVHS, the enrollment at the main campus would be 2,931 with needed seats at 831, which represents 28 portables or 2 new buildings the size of the current expansion.

It should be noted that, given it's current financial crisis, ESUHSD may need to keep these seats open should they have no other choice but to close an under-enrolled school, thus forcing the remaining students to adjacent schools and consuming any open seats.

Community

The communities surrounding these schools see the data: 0 (zero) of the 11 ESUHSD high schools are performing at the state target of 800 API, and one school is on the NCLB list. The enrollment at Evergreen's two high schools continues to climb. The October 2004 Hoover Institution of Stanford University report states that "larger schools had higher chances of being a failing school, as expected". While larger schools were trendy 30 years ago, conventional wisdom is that smaller schools are more conducive to proper learning environments than larger. This is supported by the support for charter schools, private schools, and ESUHSD's own building habits, with EVHS (the most recently built high school) being built for just 1,700, and extra land at the site sold off as surplus.

Community-based schools are in the guiding principles of the EVP. Defining "community" is becoming increasingly harder with larger enrollments spanning growing geographies. Community participation in schools is important for the success of the school. Private schools recognize this and demand parent volunteering to foster that feeling of community, and help make the school successful. Fund raising efforts also benefit from the community feel around smaller schools (we see this at elementary schools as well).

Smaller schools also provide a safer environment. The more students you crowd into existing spaces creates tension at gathering points like gyms, lockers, cafeterias, libraries, and rest rooms. Smaller schools also offer more students a chance to participate in athletic and social programs. At large schools larger numbers of students compete for the same few spots on sports teams, school plays, student government, and honors and advanced placement classes. Students that would be able to participate in these programs at lower enrolled schools, are consequently left out at larger enrolled schools, diminishing their high school experience, and possibly effecting their preparation for college.

Disappearing Opportunity

The EVP will usher in a closing of the last remaining large parcels of land in Evergreen (San Jose District 8). Once this project has the go-ahead there will be *NO* sites suitable for a full-size high school within Evergreen. The community, through the EVP task force, has the opportunity to set aside this land, but must act before the end of August 2005 if it wishes to do so. Note that the option to set aside land says *nothing* about building the high school, it *only* addresses the land set aside – for this is the *last* opportunity to reserve this land.

Concerned task force members

The following task force members find this analysis compelling and feel it indicates a clear need for a land site suitable for a new high school to be set aside as part of the EVP. These task force members are working to arrange urgent meetings with ESUHSD board members and administration to confirm Garofalo's report that they have no plan to act quickly to acquire land for a needed new high school to serve the burgeoning Evergreen community. Once the district's plans are confirmed then the task force can take action to ensure that the high school education needs of the Evergreen community are appropriately met.

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Dan Gould - SCVCC

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